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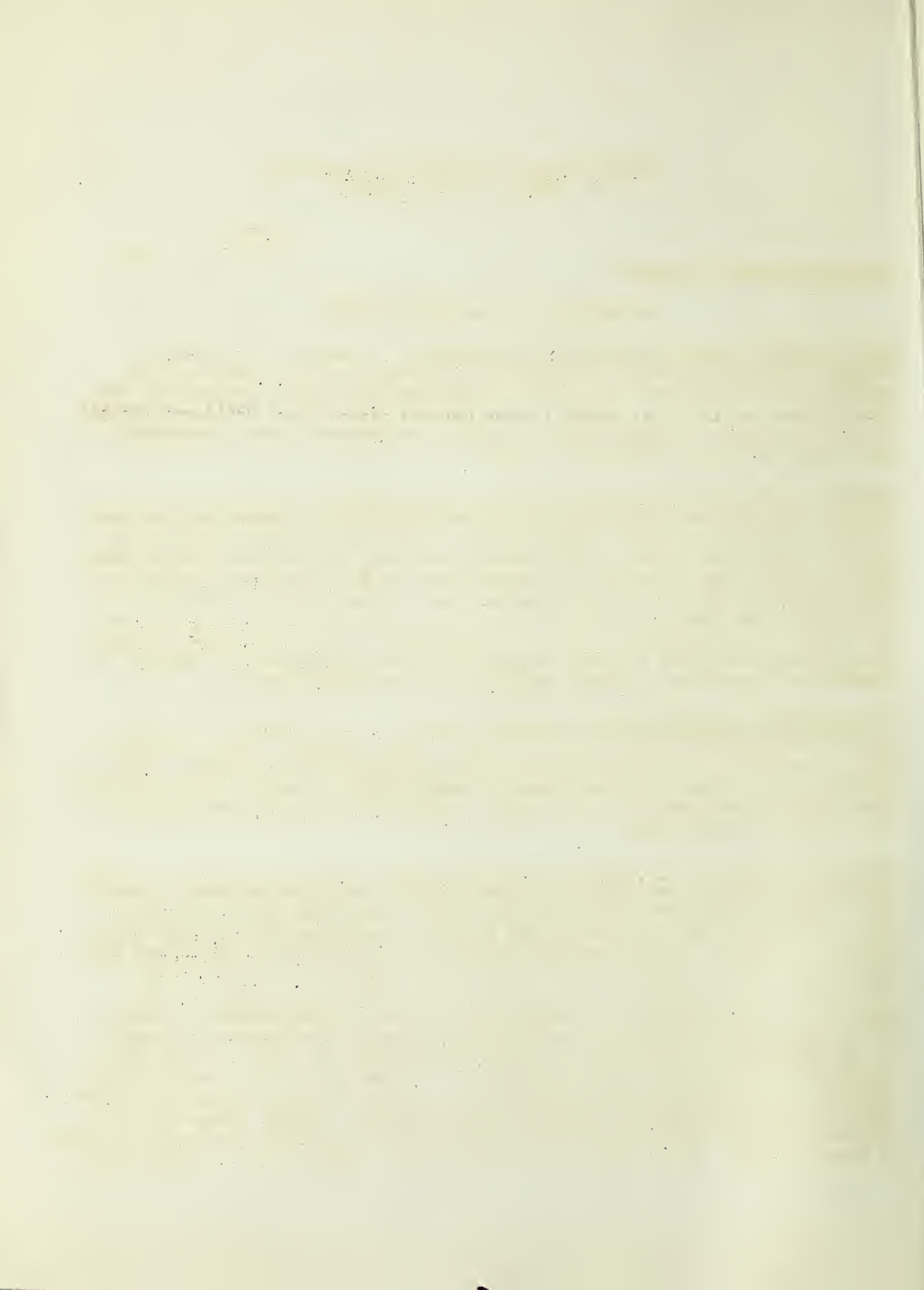
AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

USDA TO CARRY RESEARCH ON DEFENSE FIRE FIGHTING: Formation of a national defense fire-fighting corps, modeled after the famous A.R.P. that has been successful in fighting air raid fires in England, has been recommended by the Fire Defense committee of the NDAC. The proposed fire corps may number several million men, and will include all the regular professional fire departments and a large number of civilian recruits.

BECAUSE OF ITS EXTENDED STUDIES OF GRAIN DUST EXPLOSIONS, and related fire hazards, the USDA was selected to direct the committee's research in fire prevention, with the dual duty of studying the causes of important fires and explosions in defense projects, and devising new chemical means of fighting fires. DAVID J. PRICE, the Department's representative on the committee, who has directed the Bureau of Agricultural Chemistry and Engineering grain dust fire investigations for years, was named as head of the fire prevention research for the program. The Department also has been asked to aid in promoting organization of auxilliary fire brigades in rural districts throughout the country, especially in areas near defense factories and Army cantonments.

THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED THAT EACH STATE appoint a representative from its regular fire-fighting bodies to serve on the State National Defense committee and to coordinate fire prevention activities throughout his territory. The National Fire Defense committee includes representatives from the War and Navy Departments, organization of city mayors, and various national professional fire-fighting organizations.

DISPOSSESSED FARMERS IN 12 DEFENSE DISTRICTS AIDED: Assisted by local Land Use Planning committees, the USDA is working with Army purchasing agents in attempting to help dispossessed farm owners and tenants in defense areas find other farms quickly, or new employment where desired. As an example, the Department and the St. Charles County Planning committee are helping 225 dispossessed farm families from the 20,000-acre area near Weldon Springs, Mo., purchased for a TNT plant. About one-third of the dispossessed group are tenants. Farmers desiring to buy new farms are supplied with a list of nearby farms for sale. Other farmers are directed to construction jobs on the factory site. A scale of indemnification was developed to compensate tenants as well as owners for moving costs and losses in farm operations. The FSA hopes that funds will be available to "stake" farmers lacking the cash to tide themselves over the interval between the present and receipt of the indemnity. Through these and other methods, the Department hopes to help cushion the shocks which follow dislocations in defense areas. Other communities where similar projects are in progress are:



Madison, Ind., Rolla, Mo., Little Rock, Ark., Burlington, Iowa, Union City, Ind., Radford, Va., Annistown, Ala., Camo Edwards, near Sandwich, Mass., and the Melcon Springs site (15 miles from St. Louis).

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: ARGENTINA: The Government has announced that, effective Jan. 1, it would purchase feed and brewing barley from growers at guaranteed minimum prices for new crop barley delivered at Buenos Aires. Feed barley minimum is 4.50 pesos per 100 kilos (29.17 cents per bushel) and for brewing barley, 5 pesos per 100 kilos (32.41 cents per bushel). Resale of brewing barley will be made to brewers by the Grain Board at 8 pesos per 100 kilos (51.83 cents per bushel). In case of direct purchases from growers, the brewers must pay the Grain Board 3 pesos per 100 kilos (19.45 cents per bushel). Provision is made to prevent acreage expansion by providing that growers may be called upon to reduce their acreage by not more than 10 per cent as a condition of the guaranteed price.

THE ARGENTINE COTTON BOARD is making arrangements for extending credit to Spain to enable that country to purchase 22,000 metric tons (101,000 bales or 478 pounds) of Argentine cotton. The cotton to be sold will be mostly low grades upon which the government loans to growers are above current market prices. Spanish-owned shares in the Buenos Aires "Chadopyf" subway will probably be pledged as collateral.

GERMANY: By a decree of the Reich Minister of Finance, effective since Dec. 16, goods originating in the Netherlands are to be admitted into Germany free of duty. A parallel decree providing for free entry of German goods into the Netherlands is anticipated in the near future.

FOOD RATIONS FOR FOUR WEEKS, Jan. 13 to Feb. 9, raise marmalade ration from 600 to 700 grams for the entire period; a special lot of 125 grams of rice is allowed and the special allotment of 250 grams of legumes will be continued; sugar allotment remains at 900 grams; instead of 125 grams of coffee substitutes consumers may take 25 grams of tea.

SUPPLIES OF FRESH VEGETABLES are not adequate although there has been a considerable expansion of area planted. Supplies of fruit will also be short. Because of scarcity of these items, the government has arranged to distribute synthetic Vitamin C to infants and nursing mothers during the period Dec. 15 to March 15.

BULGARIA: The German Tobacco Purchasing Combine in Sofia announced conclusion of an agreement to purchase 88 to 110 million pounds of Bulgarian tobacco, reportedly the largest single tobacco deal in Bulgaria's history. The amount includes all unsold stocks of the 1939 crop, estimated at 37 million pounds, plus 55 to 77 million pounds from the 1940 crop. The 1940 crop is estimated at 110 million pounds. The domestic consumption is about 11 million pounds.

RUMANIA: Further information on German-Rumanian trade agreement of Dec. 4 reveals that farm machinery will be delivered by Germany for use next spring. Rumanian farmers will be trained to use this modern equipment in German schools and on model farms to be established in Rumania by Germany. German aid in rebuilding Rumanian transportation system will be centered at first on railroads and construction of new pipe lines, Germany supplying both the materials and the experts. Committees have been organized for discussing the German investment program in individual Rumanian industries and agreements have been reached regarding German deliveries of equipment for electrical stations, water works, and broadcasting stations.

SLOVAKIA: The recent trade agreement with Russia provides that merchandise to the value of 40 million dollars shall be exchanged between the two countries annually. The agreement also provides that Russia is to deliver raw cotton to Slovakia in exchange for Slovakian finished textiles.

JAPAN: Increasing state control of business continues as the outstanding feature in Japanese economic developments. Such control is being effected by amalgamation, mergers, and reorganization of numerous industrial, commercial and financial corporations. The keynote of sessions of the East Asia Economic conference now being held in Tokyo is the consummation of a "great East Asia co-prosperity sphere."

